

when we consider the difficulty of obtaining the exact names and addresses of the zoologists scattered over the whole of the civilized world, and of ascertaining the composition of the staffs of the numerous museums, academies, and other scientific institutions, it is a matter of wonder that the task has been so well performed. The Address-Book has the further merit of being legibly printed and of being sold at a price which renders it accessible to the "working man."

XXXVIII.—*Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.*

WE have received the following letters, addressed to "The Editors":—

SIRS,—I have the great pleasure to record the finding of two nests and eggs of the Honey-Buzzard (*Pernis apivorus*) in Somersetshire in May 1897 and May 1899 by Mr. Charles E. Nipper, of Axbridge, Somerset. The first nest was discovered at an isolated spot called Callow Rocks, and contained four eggs. The second nest was found on the highest point of the Mendips, Blackdown, and this also contained four eggs.

Both nests were rudely constructed, the first being half-way down a precipitous cliff and the second amongst some boulders on the ground.

In each case the female bird was seen and recognised as the Honey-Buzzard.

Yours &c.,

St. Albans, Herts,

W. PERCIVAL WESTELL, M.B.O.U.

March 14th, 1901.

SIRS,—In the April number of 'The Ibis' for this year, p. 227, there is a remark about Waikthlatingmayalwa in the Great Chaco being the most southern locality where *Formicivora strigilata* has been found. This statement is not quite correct, as the species had already been noticed from San Lorenzo, in the Argentine province of Jujuy, where it was obtained by Dr. Borelli [Boll. Mus. Tor. N. 292 (1897), p. 22; N. 378 (1900), p. 9]. In the latter reference

the same species is mentioned also from Urucum, in Matto Grosso, another new locality.

Yours &c.,

Turin, Zool. Mus.,
20th April, 1901.

T. SALVADORI.

SIRS,—In the last issue of 'The Ibis' (above, p. 355) Mr. Abel Chapman says that since 1895 I have not afforded "any further information as to the Pelicans that visit the Jutland coast," and that he has looked in vain for any evidence that I have "even tried to solve this interesting question." Mr. Chapman must have overlooked my note in 'The Ibis' for 1899, p. 658, and also my reply to Herr O. Haase in the 'Ornithologische Monatsbericht' for 1899, p. 173. So I may be permitted now to state again that only negative evidence is accumulating, in spite of much inquiry. In the spring of 1898 I revisited the spot, Ringkjøbing Fjord, that I had already visited in 1881—this time in company with Dr. Rambusch; but no traces of Pelicans were to be seen, nor could the birds be heard of. Dr. Rambusch has for several years been engaged in a study of the history of Ringkjøbing Fjord, both natural and agricultural; he has visited it repeatedly, and has been in communication with a number of men knowing the Fjord exceedingly well; but although he is especially interested in birds, he has not succeeded in getting any information as to the Pelicans, as may be seen from his book 'Studies on Ringkjøbing Fjord' (Copenhagen, 1900, 8vo). Regarding the occurrence of *Pelecanus crispus* in Jutland in the Stone-age, a new work may be consulted: 'Affaldsdynger fra Stenalderen i Danmark' (Copenhagen, 1900, 4to, pp. 110 & 185).

I may venture to remind your readers that collecting on the Royal domain of Ringkjøbing Fjord is now prohibited, the birds being strictly preserved (see note from the Danish Minister, 'Ibis,' 1898, p. 181).

Yours &c.,

Universitets Zool. Museum,
Kjøbenhavn.

HERLUF WINGE.

SIRS,—An Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*) was obtained on or about the 7th of February 1901, at Weston-by-Weedon, Northamptonshire, where it was found in a ditch by a dog and was shot as it rose. It is in immature plumage, and has the face grey, black marks on the wings, and a blackish bar on the end of the tail.

Yours &c.,

O. V. APLIN.

Bloxham, Oxon,
6th May, 1901.

SIRS,—On the 10th of May 1901, when Mr. Gregory Haines and I were on the top of one of the highest mountains in Merionethshire, on which some patches of snow still lingered, we saw four Dotterels (*Eudromias morinellus*). They were running about on a slope of very short herbage thickly scattered over with large stones, and were wonderfully tame, letting us come within ten yards of them. We might easily have overlooked them had not their rarely uttered low twittering whistle close at hand attracted our attention. They ran before us, keeping not more than ten yards ahead, occasionally stopping to pick up food, to chase one another, either in play or anger, or to stretch out a wing in characteristic fashion, until they arrived at the edge of a band of large rounded boulders, about fifteen yards wide, over which they seemed unwilling to run. There they stopped and faced us, and as we walked to within four paces of them and stood and discussed their beauty, gave us one of the greatest treats in the way of bird-life we had ever enjoyed; every detail of the Dotterels' plumage and the expression and glitter of their eyes were plain to us. In a few minutes the little birds rose, flew quickly over the boulders, and settled immediately on the other side, where we left them, hoping that, despite the bitter cold, which almost froze our fingers, one of these alpine slopes might tempt them to stay and breed. Two of the birds were in the finest of plumage; one was duller and lighter, and had broad yellowish feather-edgings; the fourth was intermediate between the two stages. The Dotterel might easily escape notice on some

of the less famous Welsh summits, where hardly anyone but an occasional shepherd sets foot; for they are the quietest of all our Plovers. The birds we saw hardly ever uttered their low "twiddle, twiddle, twiddle," except when they took wing for a few yards. The little we know about the presence of the Dotterel on the Welsh mountains, or of its real or presumed absence from them, may perhaps excuse the length of this letter.

Yours &c.,

O. V. APLIN.

18th May, 1901.

SIRS,—So far as I am aware, the Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) is not known to migrate further south in Africa than the Gambia on the west and Somaliland on the east. I have recently obtained some evidence to show that it passes far beyond these limits.

Lient. R. B. Bridgeman, of H.M.S. 'Partridge,' called upon me a short time ago bringing with him some drawings and photographs of birds that he had recently shot at Durban and elsewhere. Amongst these was a sketch of what is apparently a Bar-tailed Godwit. The bird was shot in Durban harbour, and was identified as above by Capt. Hunt of the 'Partridge'*. It was also compared with an Indian example of that species in the Durban Museum and found to be similar, but unfortunately the specimen was not preserved.

Yours &c.,

W. L. SCLATER.

South African Museum, Capetown,
May 15th, 1901.

SIRS,—Dr. L. v. Lorenz and Herr C. E. Hellmayr have lately described (J. f. O. 1901, pp. 230-245) a collection of birds made by Mr. G. W. Bury, near Yeshbum, about 150 miles N.E. of Aden. After carefully reading their report and comparing the descriptions with Arabian specimens in

* [Cf. Lient. Bridgeman's letter to 'The Field' of June 15th (vol. xcvii. p. 884).—EDD.]

the British Museum, I have no hesitation in saying that most, if not all, of the forms characterized as new have no claim to even subspecific rank.

Mr. Bury also forwarded specimens of a few birds to Mr. A. B. Percival, who has presented them to the British Museum. Among these was an example of the fine new species, *Rhynchostruthus percivali* (see Nov. Zool. viii. p. 54).

The species described as new by Dr. v. Lorenz and Herr Hellmayr are the following:—

1. *AMYDRUS HADRAMAUTICUS* (op. cit. p. 231).

A pair of the specimens collected by Mr. Bury at Yeshbum was forwarded to me through Mr. Percival. They agree perfectly with typical examples of *A. tristrami*, which was known to leave Palestine in the cold weather, but its winter-quarters were unknown till Mr. Bury met with it in S. Arabia (*cf.* Grant, Nov. Zool. viii. p. 54, February 1901).

2. *ÆDEMOSYNE ORIENTALIS* (op. cit. p. 232).

Messrs. Lorenz and Hellmayr separate the eastern form of *Ædemosyne* from the western, reserving for the latter the name of *Æ. cantans* (Gmel.).

Fringilla cantans Gm. was founded on the "Brown Grosbeak" (*cf.* Brown, Ill. Zool. p. 66, pl. xxvii. fig. 2). Brown gives no locality, but his figure obviously agrees with adult birds from Arabia and Abyssinia, having the upper parts distinctly barred. Gmelin (*ex* Latham, Gen. Syn. ii. pt. 1, p. 157) gives the locality as Africa. Even allowing that the West African form differs slightly in having the back less barred (though this character is variable), there is no reason for assuming, as Messrs. Lorenz and Hellmayr do, that Gmelin's name *Æ. cantans* refers to the West African form. Brown's figure, quoted above, suggests the reverse. The Arabian specimens named *Æ. orientalis* by Lorenz and Hellmayr are obviously immature. Fully adult birds from Arabia and Abyssinia have the chin and throat coloured as in birds from the west, but in the latter the barring on the upper parts is generally more obscure.

3. *PASSER DOMESTICUS BURYI* (op. cit. p. 233).

The Sparrow found in Arabia is, in my opinion, typical *P. indicus*. It is a well-known fact that *Passer domesticus* merges gradually into *P. indicus*, and for this reason Dr. Sharpe has united them under the former name (Cat. Birds, xii, p. 307). It is not the case that examples from Arabia differ from Indian birds, unless we compare Arabian birds in winter plumage with Indian birds in summer plumage, or the reverse.

4. *FRINGILLARIA TAHAPISI CAPISTRATA* (op. cit. p. 235).

F. capistrata, described from "Kafferland," is undoubtedly synonymous with *F. tahapisi*, Gray, and was apparently founded on a specimen in worn plumage with the chestnut edges to the wing-feathers worn off. The occurrence of *F. tahapisi* in Arabia is interesting, if the identification is correct. The only species, however, met with in the country by the Percival-Dodson expedition was *F. striolata* Licht.

5. *ZOSTEROPS ARABS* (op. cit. p. 236).

All the differences mentioned in the description are to be found in our series of *Zosterops abyssinica*. The unsexed types of *Z. arabs* are probably females, which would account for their paler colouring; from the measurements given the Yeshbum birds are not smaller than typical examples of *Z. abyssinica*.

6. *NECTARINIA MUELLERI* (op. cit. p. 237).

This species is said to be chiefly distinguished from *N. metallica* by having the head, back, and throat dark steel-green, instead of bronze-green.

It is a well-known fact that with wear and exposure metallic green feathers become bronze or purplish. The Arabian birds are, in my opinion, absolutely identical with those from N.E. Africa.

7. *LANIUS BURYI* (op. cit. p. 238).

It is necessary to have devoted special attention to the Grey Shrikes to appreciate the difficulty of the group and

the inadvisability of adding to the already overburdened synonymy of *Lanius fallax*.

8. *PYCNONOTUS REICHENOWI* (op. cit. p. 241).

Messrs. Lorenz and Hellmayr, in their anxiety to make new species, seem to have overlooked the fact that *P. xanthopygus* was originally described from Arabia. As a matter of fact, examples from S. Arabia, of which we have many, are perfectly similar to specimens from Somaliland and other parts of N.E. Africa.

9. *COLUMBA LIVIA SCHIMPERI* (op. cit. p. 244).

It is extremely doubtful whether *C. schimperi* is really separable from *C. intermedia*. Many Indian examples determined by Count Salvadori as *C. intermedia* are, in my opinion, indistinguishable from typical *C. schimperi*.

Yours &c.,

W. R. OGILVIE GRANT.

British Museum (Natural History),
May 3rd, 1901.

The Library of the late Mr. Philip Crowley.—The sale of the Library of our late friend and associate took place at Mr. J. C. Stevens's Rooms at King Street, Covent Garden, on the 15th of April last. The chief "bird-books" were sold at the following prices:—

Blaauw's 'Monograph of the Cranes,' £5 10s.; Booth's 'Rough Notes on British Birds,' 3 vols., £25 4s.; Buller's 'Birds of New Zealand,' 2nd edition, 2 vols., £6 7s. 6d.; 'Catalogue of Birds in the British Museum,' 27 vols., £48; Dresser's 'Birds of Europe,' 9 vols., £56; Dresser's 'Monograph of the Bee-eaters,' £4 4s.; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Grouse,' £6; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Ant-Thrushes,' £4 10s.; Elliot's 'Birds of N. America,' £9; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Hornbills,' £7; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Birds of Paradise,' £6; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Pheasants,' 2 vols., £53 11s.; Gould's 'Birds of Asia,' 7 vols., £51; Gould's 'Monograph of the Toucans,' £6; Gould's 'Birds of New Guinea,' 5 vols., £45; Gould's 'Century of Birds from the Himalaya Mountains,' £5 10s.;

Gould's 'Birds of Great Britain,' 5 vols., £49 7s.; Gould's 'Monograph of the Trogons,' 2nd edition, £3 3s.; Gould's 'Icones Avium,' £8; Gray's 'Genera of Birds,' 3 vols., £17 17s.; 'The Ibis,' 1859-1900, £75; Lilford's 'Birds of the British Islands,' 7 vols., £63; Lilford's 'Birds of Northamptonshire,' £6 7s. 6d.; Marshall's 'Monograph of the Scansorial Barbets,' £3 15s.; 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London,' 1830-1900, £60; Rothschild's 'Avifauna of Laysan,' £5; Selater and Salvin's 'Exotic Ornithology,' £6; Seebohm's 'History of British Birds,' 4 vols., £4 4s.; Sharpe's 'Monograph of the Kingfishers,' £8 15s.; Shelley's 'Monograph of the Sun-Birds,' £4 15s.; 'Transactions of the Zoological Society of London,' vols. i., vi. to xiv., and xv. pts. 1-4, £8 10; Yarrell's 'History of British Birds,' ed. 4, 4 vols., £5 5s.

The Intestinal Tract of Birds.—At the Linnean Society's meeting on the 21st of March last, Mr. P. Chalmers Mitchell, F.Z.S., read a paper entitled "The Anatomy and Morphology of the Intestinal Tract in Birds; with Remarks on the Nomenclature and Valuation of Zoological Characters." He described the various conformations of the intestinal tract in birds, his material consisting of many hundreds of specimens belonging to all the living *Ratitæ* as well as to all the Orders and Suborders and nearly all the Families of *Carinatae*. He discussed the morphology of the tract, distinguishing, in their adult anatomy and in their relation to the embryonic metamerism, the duodenum, Meckel's tract, and the rectum. He described the nature and distribution of the changes in these organs and in Meckel's diverticulum and the colic cæca, and gave an account of a remarkable and hitherto undescribed series of nervous structures belonging to the autonomic nervous system, apparently peculiar to birds. In discussing the relation of the series of facts described to the Systems of Avian classification, he insisted on the primary necessity of valuing characters as Archicentric or Apocentric, primitive or specialized. A common possession of a character in either the Archicentric or Apocentric condition was no

indication of systematic affinity. Amongst Apocentric characters he distinguished between *multiradial apocentricities* (many of which were plastic effects and afforded no guide to affinity) and *uniradial apocentricities* (which had arisen by a limitation and definition of variability in a particular branch of the family tree).

New Expedition to the Malay Peninsula.—We are informed in 'Nature' (vol. lxiii. p. 447, 1901) that a small zoological expedition has just started for the Malay Peninsula. It consists of Mr. N. Annaudale, who was a member of the "Skeat" expedition to the Siamese Malay States in 1899, and Mr. N. C. Robinson, recently assistant in the Zoological Department of University College, Liverpool. They intend to settle for a year in the native State of Jalor, near the east coast of Lower Siam, and to explore the neighbourhood of Patani and Biseret. Collections will be made in all branches of natural history.

The Ægithognathous Palate.—At the Linnean Society's meeting on May 2nd, Mr. W. P. Pyecraft, M.A., A.L.S., read a paper "On the Palate of the Neognathæ," in which he traced the derivation of the Neognathine from the more primitive Struthious or Palæognathine palate. The Neognathine, he pointed out, differs from the Struthious palate in that the palatines have shifted inwards to meet one another in the middle line below the pterygoids, with the distal ends of which they ultimately fuse. Further specialization of this type results in the segmentation of the pterygoid, the fusion of the segmented portion with the underlying palatines, and the formation of a joint at the point of segmentation—an apparent palato-ptyergoid articulation. The palates of the *Galli* and *Anseres* reach the high-water mark of specialization in this direction; the hitherto more or less intimately related pterygoid and vomer being completely divorced, and the latter depending entirely upon the palatines for support.

Birds of the outlying Islands of New Zealand.—The specimens of birds collected by the Earl of Ranfurly, Governor of New Zealand, during several trips round the outlying islands under his jurisdiction (as alluded to in a former paragraph, above, p. 358), have now been received at the British Museum. They were preserved in formaline, but have been very successfully converted into skins. Besides two Southern Mergansers (*Meryus australis*) and the Flightless Duck (*Nesonetta aucklandica*), there are examples of a new Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax ranfurlyi*) and of other rare and little-known species.

Mr. Pease's Birds from Abyssinia.—During his recent journey in Somaliland and Southern Abyssinia Mr. Alfred Pease, M.P., was accompanied by the excellent collector Mr. Harwood, and brought back a series of 800 skins of birds, which are being examined and named at the British Museum. Although few of them are new to science, there are many representatives of typically Abyssinian species among them (such as *Iyux aequatorialis*), hardly known to us except by Rüppell's descriptions. Mr. Ogilvie Grant promises us a paper on the collection for the next number of this Journal.

News of Mr. A. B. Percival, M.B.O.U.—Mr. A. B. Percival, on returning from his last expedition into South Arabia [an account of which appeared in 'Novitates Zoologicae,' vii. pp. 243-273 (1900)], obtained an appointment in the East African Protectorate, and went out last summer to Mombasa. As opportunity has offered, he has been continuing his Natural History collections, but for a considerable time he has been quartered at Takaungu, a station on the coast, where the country is very unsuitable for collecting. He has, however, already sent home to Mr. Ogilvie Grant a collection of small mammals and birds. A second collection of birds, shortly expected, is said to contain some interesting specimens, and among them an example of the very rare *Macherhampus anderssoni*.